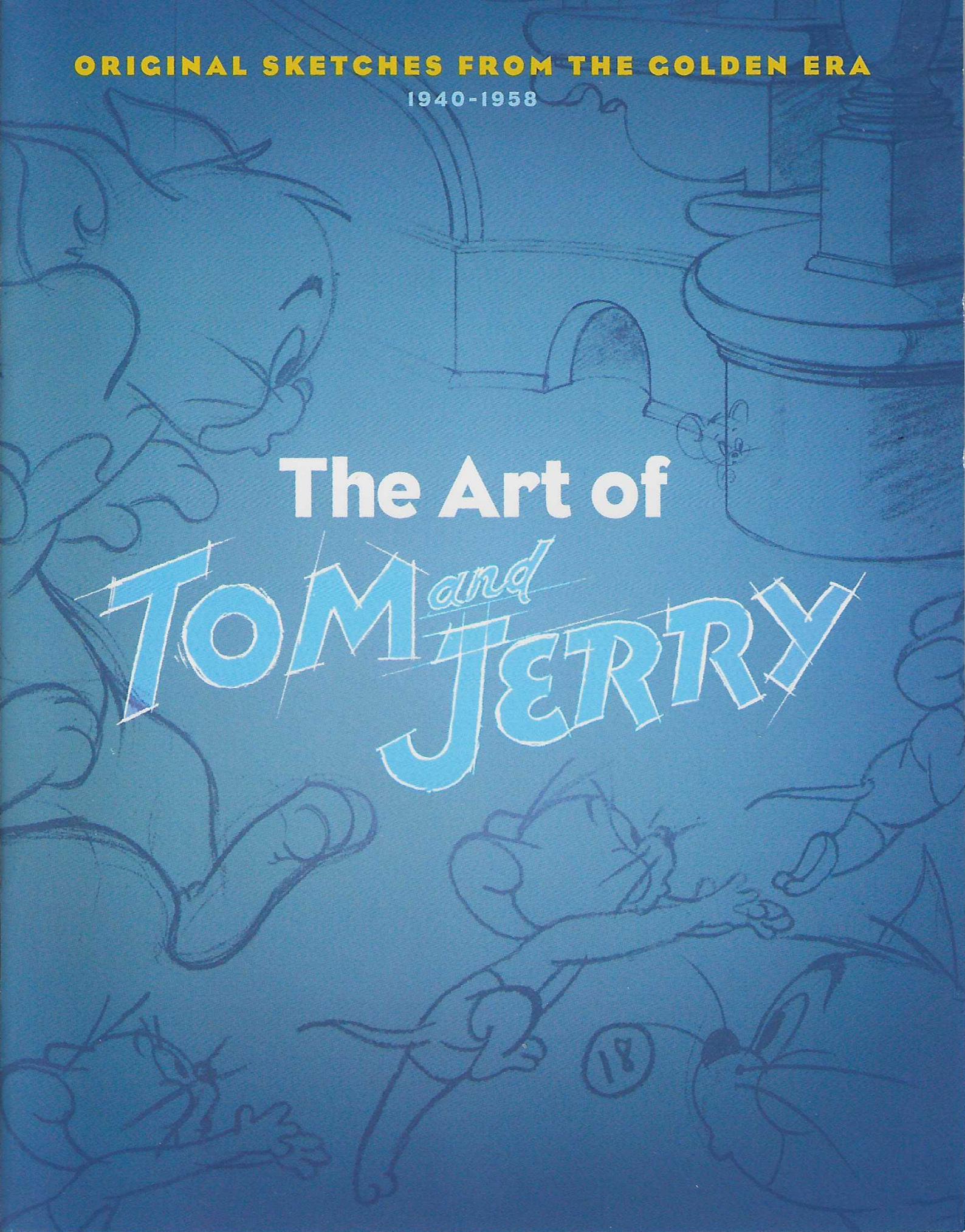
ORIGINAL SKETCHES FROM THE GOLDEN ERA

1940-1958

The Art of TOM and JERRY



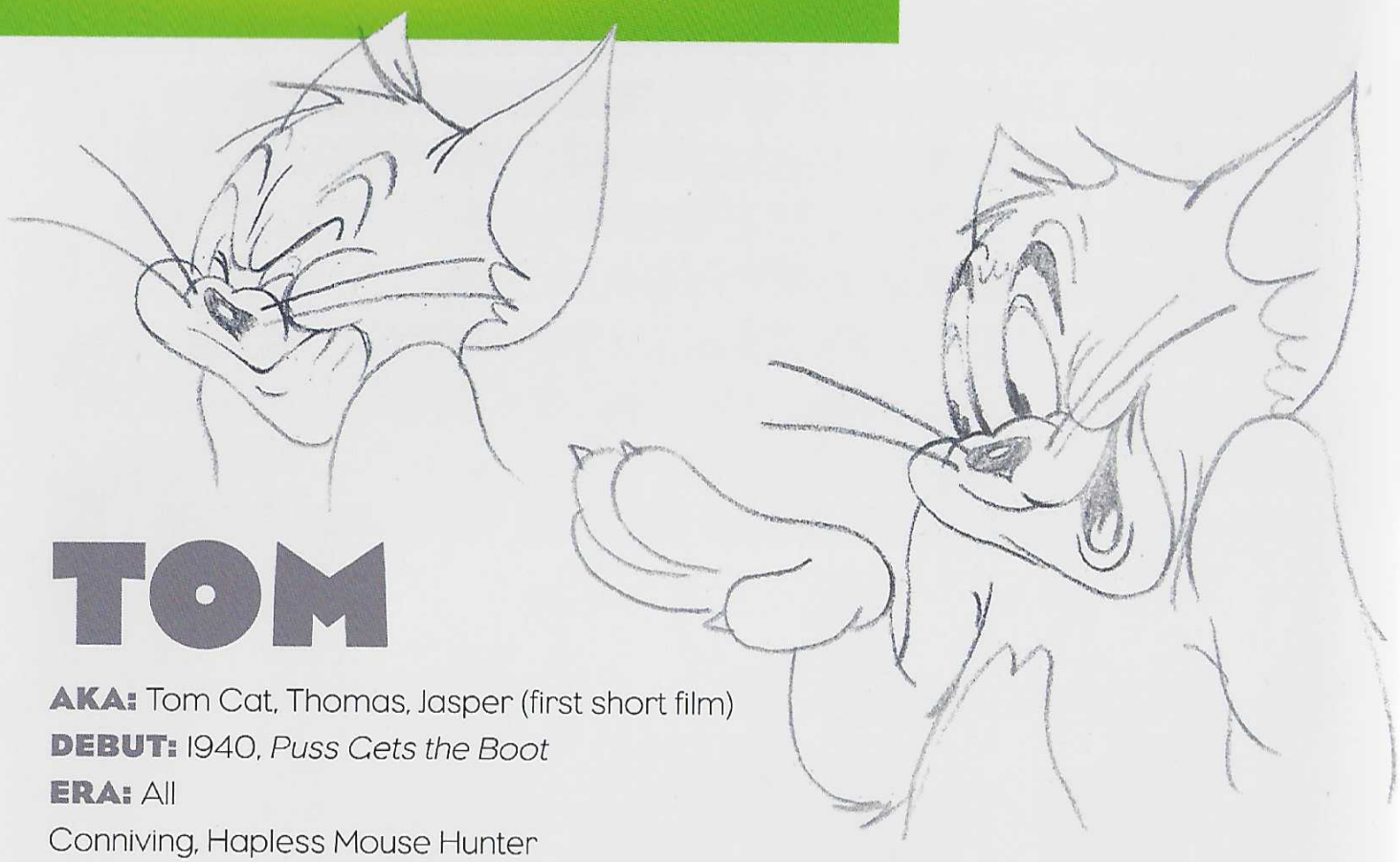
15-C

For nearly 18 years,

and through 114 animated exploits, movie theater audiences were beguiled and entertained by their favorite cat-and-mouse team, Tom and Jerry. With William Hanna and Joseph Barbera at the creative helm, an impressive array of talented artists at MGM's animation department meticulously brought forth what would become incomparable gems that have endured for generations. This booklet provides a unique look at the art of *Tom and Jerry* through rarely seen archival sketches and designs that exemplify the craft that went into making these animated shorts the timeless classics they are today.

Illustration – Dick Bickenbach

DESIGN EVOLUTION



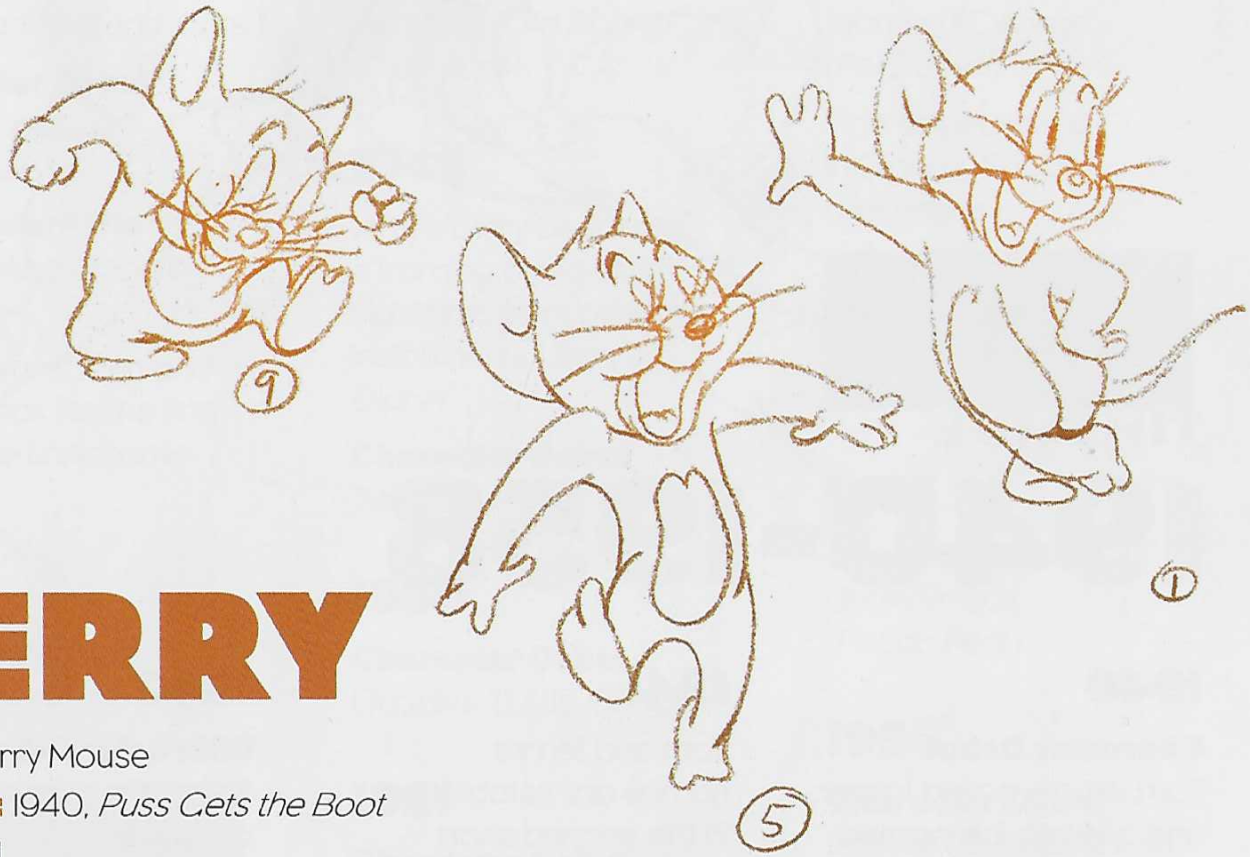
TOM

AKA: Tom Cat, Thomas, Jasper (first short film)
DEBUT: 1940, *Puss Gets the Boot*
ERA: All
Conniving, Hapless Mouse Hunter

At first pounce, Tom resembled a furry, realistic cat slinking between furniture legs on four feet. On his rounded face, a strip of white ran between his yellow and green eyes down to a small V-shaped nose. A jagged outline, thin eyebrows, ears set to the side and sharp fangs lent a devilish quality to the cat then known as Jasper.

Change was already afoot; when he next appeared, the cat had a new name and a longer, anthropomorphized face. As Tom evolved, his ears lengthened and his fangs disappeared. With thicker eyebrows, he became a skilled mime, contorting his face into comic reactions. Expressions like anger, annoyance and affection enlivened the storytelling, making him more relatable. He became bipedal with a sleeker outline, and his leaps showed remarkable elasticity as he changed directions midair.

The shift to CinemaScope in 1954 required a smooth, thick outline, eliminating his jagged tufts. Gene Deitch shaded Tom blue and simplified his shape further; Tom's cheeks, which had been three small triangles, were now one large triangle. Chuck Jones gave Tom an angular, pointed face that resembled his designs for the Grinch, as well as thick, Bela Lugosi-style eyebrows.



JERRY

AKA: Jerry Mouse
DEBUT: 1940, *Puss Gets the Boot*
ERA: All
Quick-Witted Escape Artist

Unlike Tom, Jerry's design has remained relatively consistent since his first appearance. This lovable mouse has a reddish-brown coat with a long, slightly rounded torso; a round face; and rounded, oversized ears. His belly features a large area that is a lighter shade than the rest of his fur, with a slight V-shaped indentation on top. Jerry walks on two legs exclusively, never on four, and uses his front paws as hands.

His cherubic face sports puffy cheeks, a small nose, visible eyebrows, four whiskers and a few stray tufts of hair sticking out the top of his head. His large eyes are a dominant feature, maximizing his cuteness and range of expression.

Changes to Jerry's design have mostly involved his coloring, which has shifted between lighter and darker shades of red and brown for his fur coat. The casual observer would have a hard time differentiating the various eras of Jerry.

Illustrations – Irv Spence

TIMELINE

1940-1958

1940

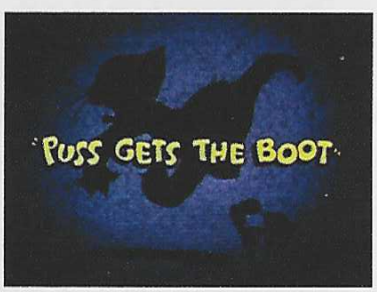
Character Debut
Tom, initially called Jasper, and a yet-to-be-named Jerry get their start in *Puss Gets the Boot*

Character Debut
The maid turned head of house, called Dinah in Tom and Jerry comics as early as 1942 but never officially named in the animated shorts (*Puss Gets the Boot*)

1941

Tom and Jerry's names are established in the second short (*The Midnight Snack*)

First Oscar® Nomination*
(*Puss Gets the Boot*)



A short introduces the notion of a truce; more than predator and prey, the two are friendly rivals (*The Night Before Christmas*)

1942

Character Debut
Spike (*Dog Trouble*), once a ferocious common rival for Tom and Jerry who later becomes an essential part of the gang

Character Debut
Toots (*Puss n' Toots*)

Tom gradually begins to walk on two feet

1943

Character Debut
Meathead (*Sufferin' Cats!*)

Character Debut
Butch, Topsy
(*Baby Puss*)

First Oscar® Win**
(*The Yankee Doodle Mouse*)

Though rare, Tom and Jerry speak for the first time (*The Lonesome Mouse*)

1945

Jerry dances with Gene Kelly in the MGM musical *Anchors Aweigh*

1946

Character Debut
Toodles Galore
(*Springtime for Thomas*), a frequent love interest for Tom

Character Debut
Nibbles (*The Milky Waif*)

1948

Character Debut
Lightning (*Old Rockin' Chair Tom*)

1949

Jerry's diary becomes a framing device for highlights from previous installments (*Jerry's Diary*)

Character Debut
Tyke (*Love That Pup*)

1950

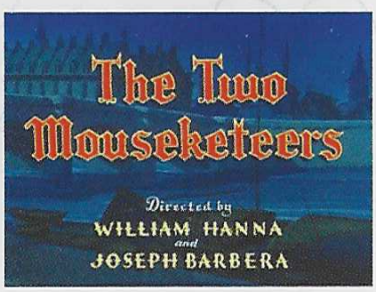
Character Debut
Quacker (*Little Quacker*)

1951

Character Debut
Muscles (*Jerry's Cousin*)

1952

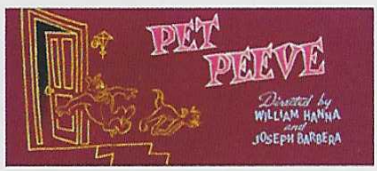
The first of the unofficial "Musketeer" series (*The Two Mouseketeers*)



1954

Character Debut
Joan and George
(*Pet Peeve*)

First appearance in CinemaScope (*Pet Peeve*)



1955

Character Debut
Uncle Pecos
(*Pecos Pest*)

1956

Character Debut
Jeannie (*Busy Buddies*)

1957

Character Debut
Tom's cousin, George
(*Timid Tabby*)

1958

While MGM's cartoon studio shut down in 1957, the release of completed short subjects continued until *Tot Watchers*, their final release, on August 1, 1958

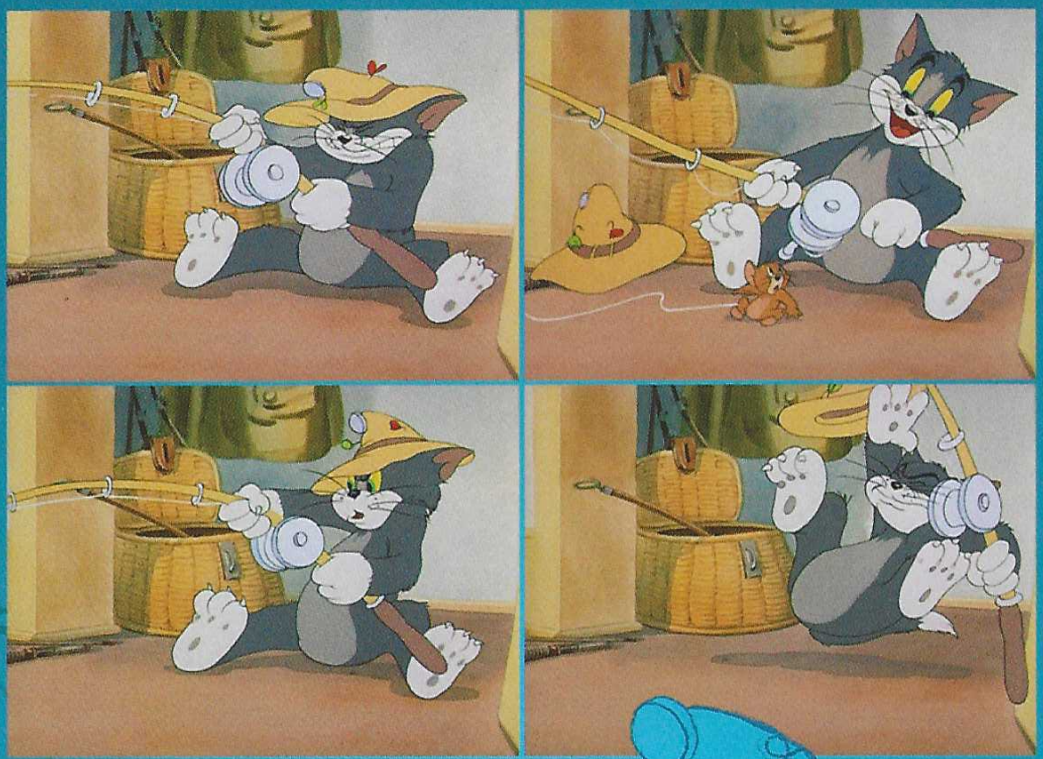
"Oscar®" is the registered trademark and service mark of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. *1940: Short Subject (Cartoon). **1943: Short Subject (Cartoon).

SUFFERIN' CATS!

Prod. #085

JANUARY 16, 1943

Illustrations
Ken Muse



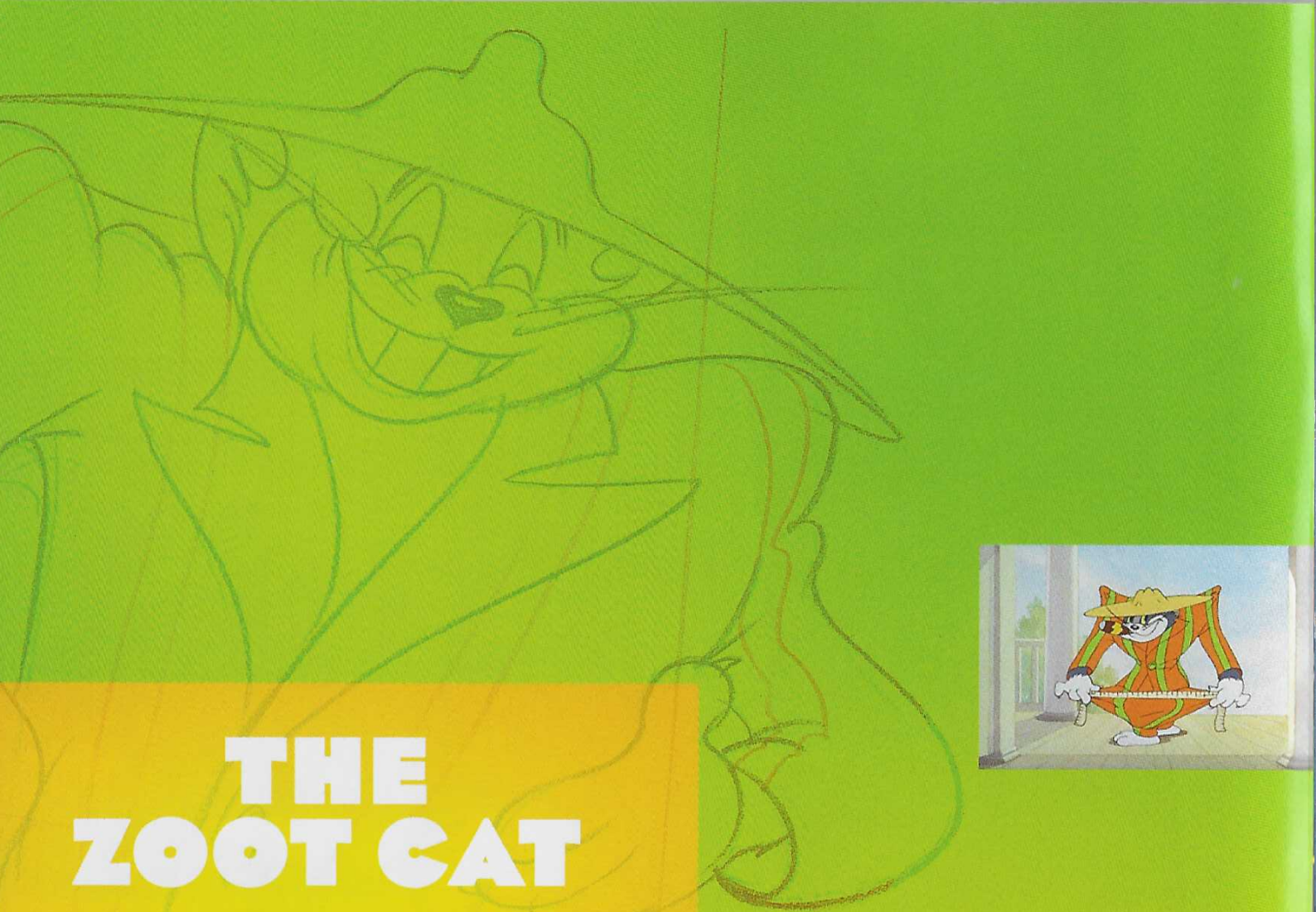
THE LONESOME MOUSE

Prod. #089

MAY 22, 1943

Illustrations

Pete Burness, Jack Zander



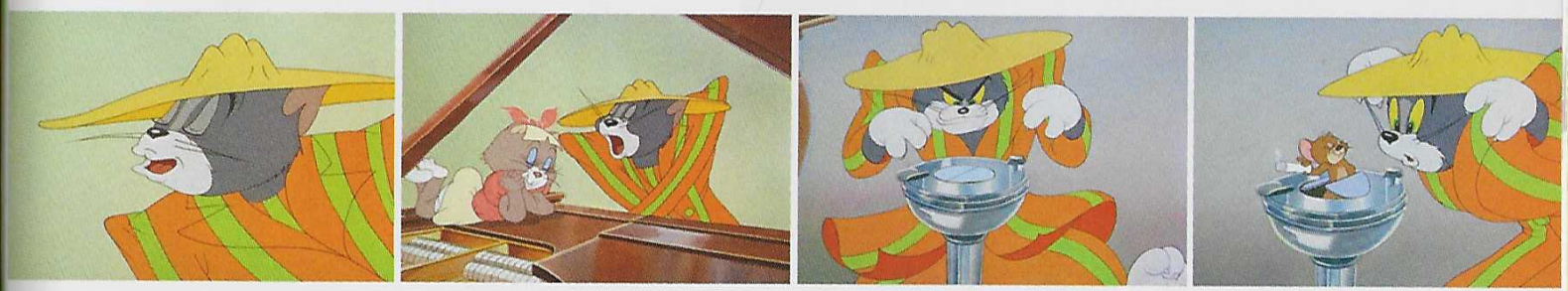
THE ZOOT CAT

Prod. #104

FEBRUARY 26, 1944

Illustrations

Irv Spence, Ken Muse, Pete Burness



FLIRTY BIRDY

Prod. #129

SEPTEMBER 22, 1945

Illustrations

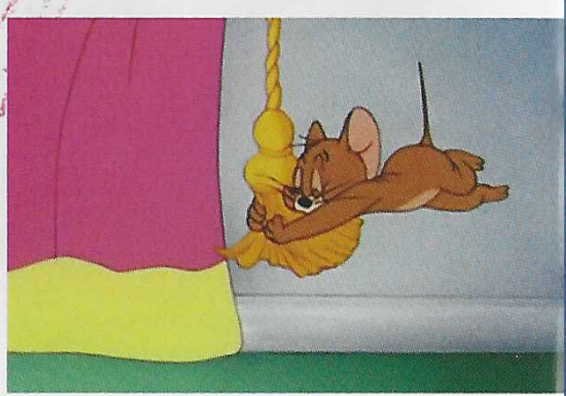
Ray Patterson, Ken Muse

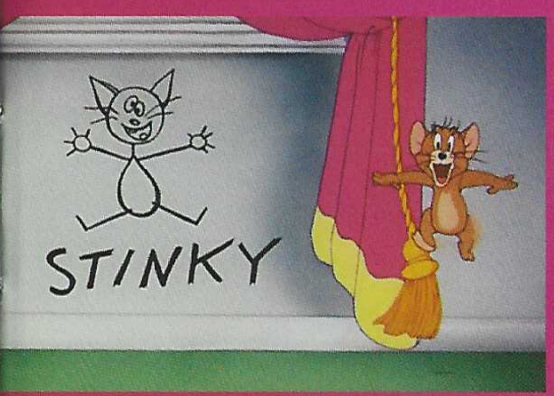
QUIET PLEASE!

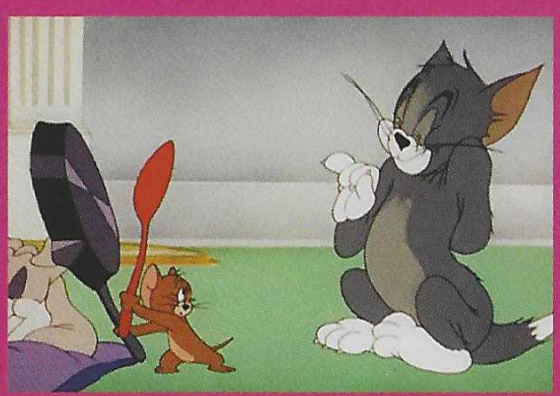
Prod. #131

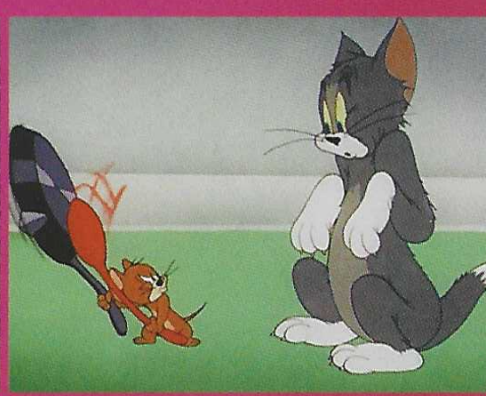
DECEMBER 22, 1945

Illustrations
Irv Spence




STINKY



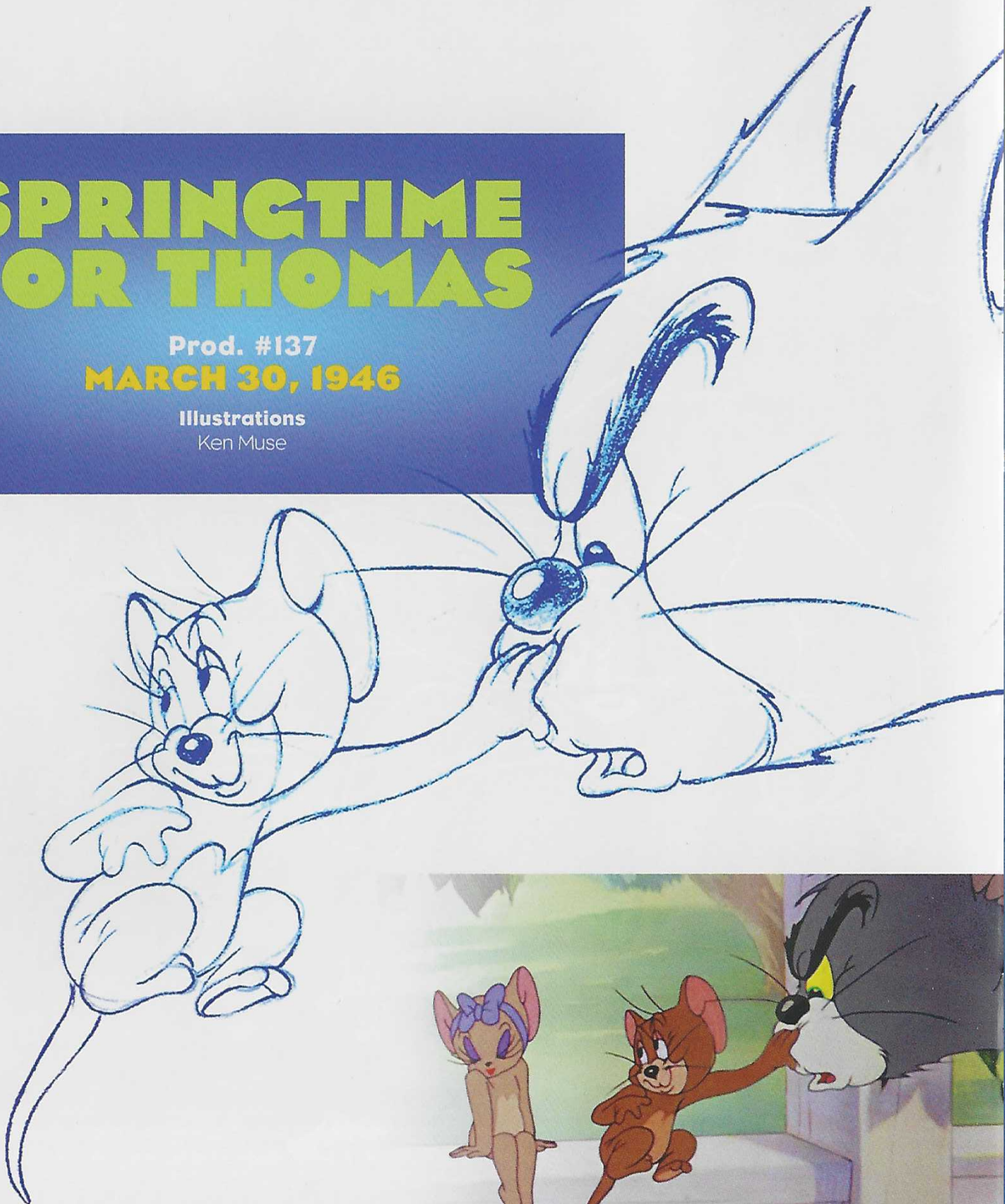


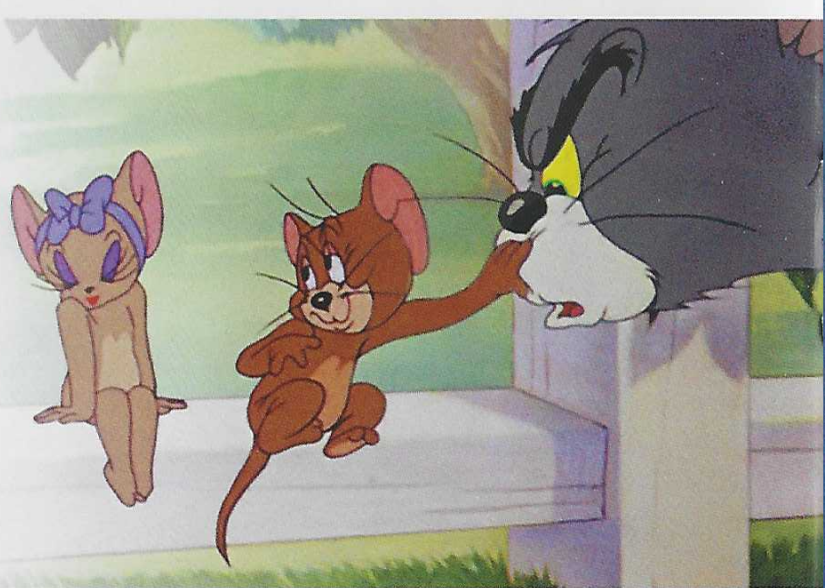
SPRINGTIME FOR THOMAS

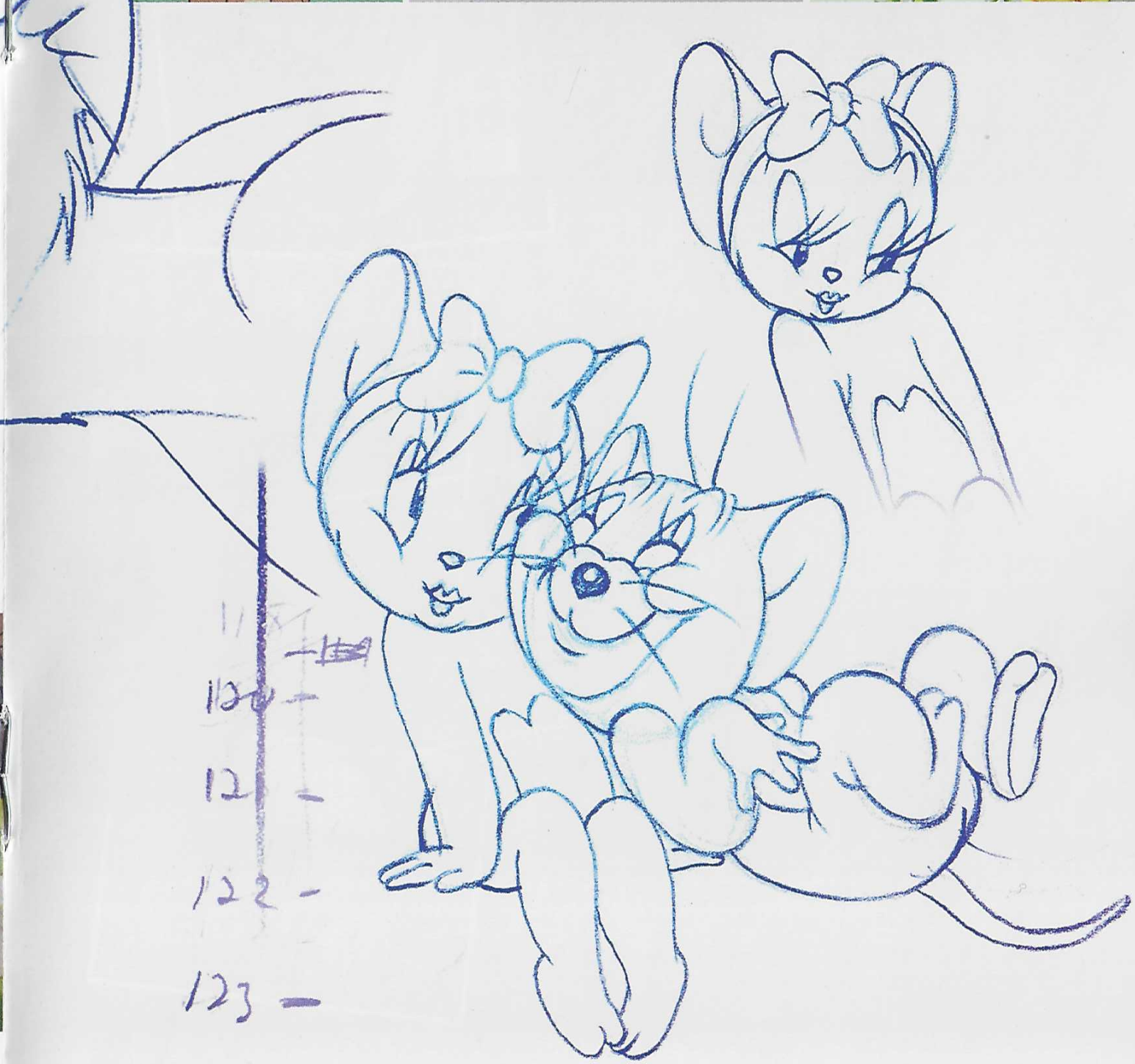
Prod. #137

MARCH 30, 1946

Illustrations
Ken Muse







MOUSE CLEANING

Prod. #182

DECEMBER 11, 1948

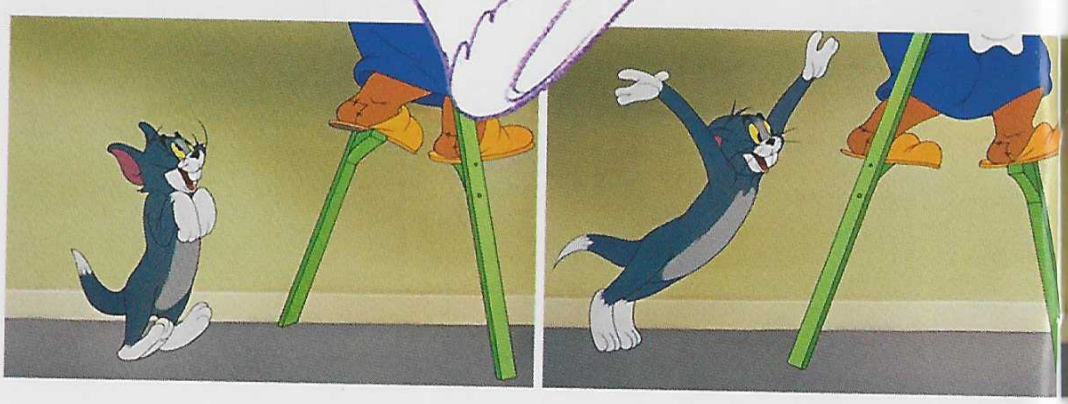
Illustrations
Ken Muse

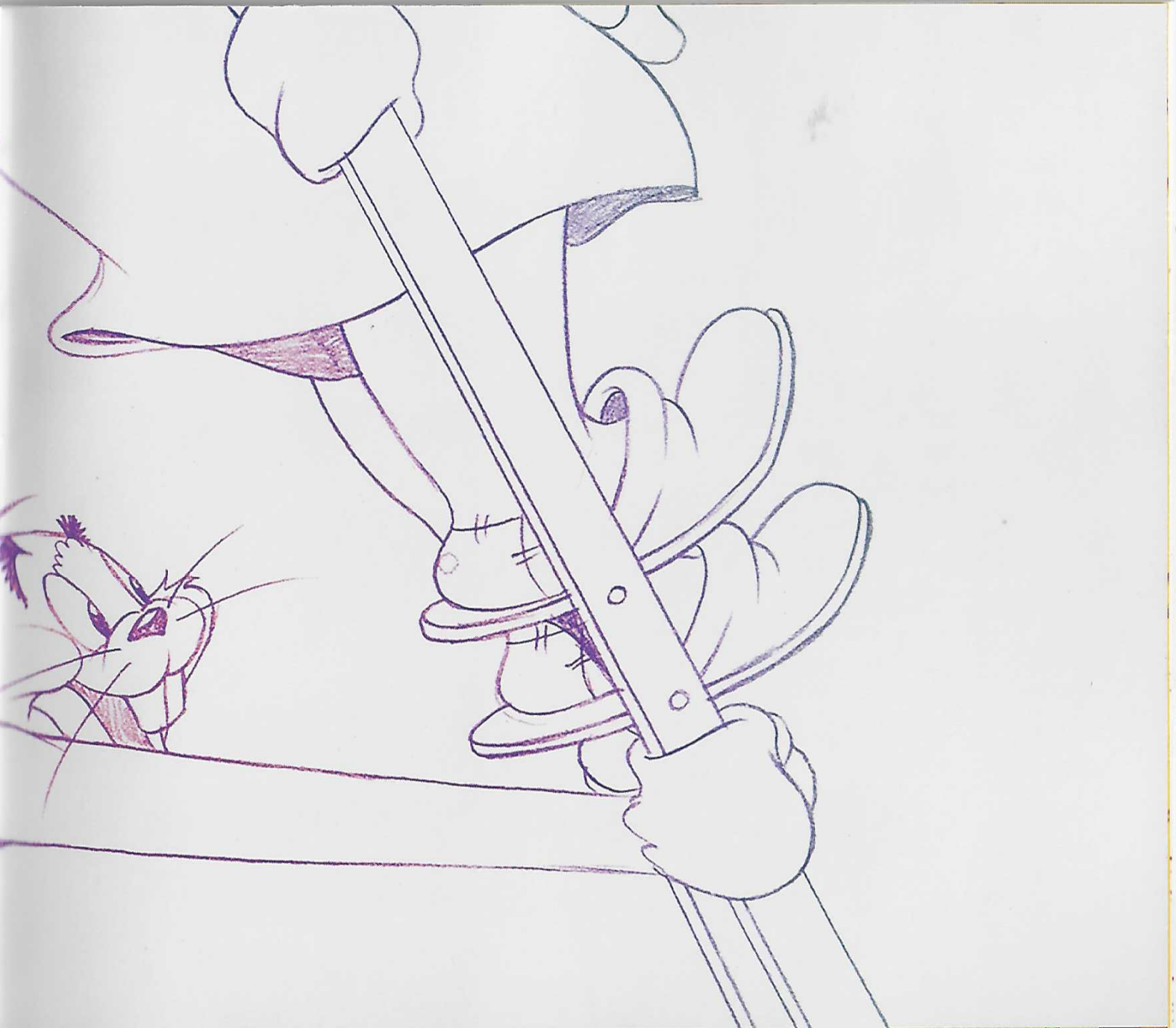
NIT-WITTY KITTY

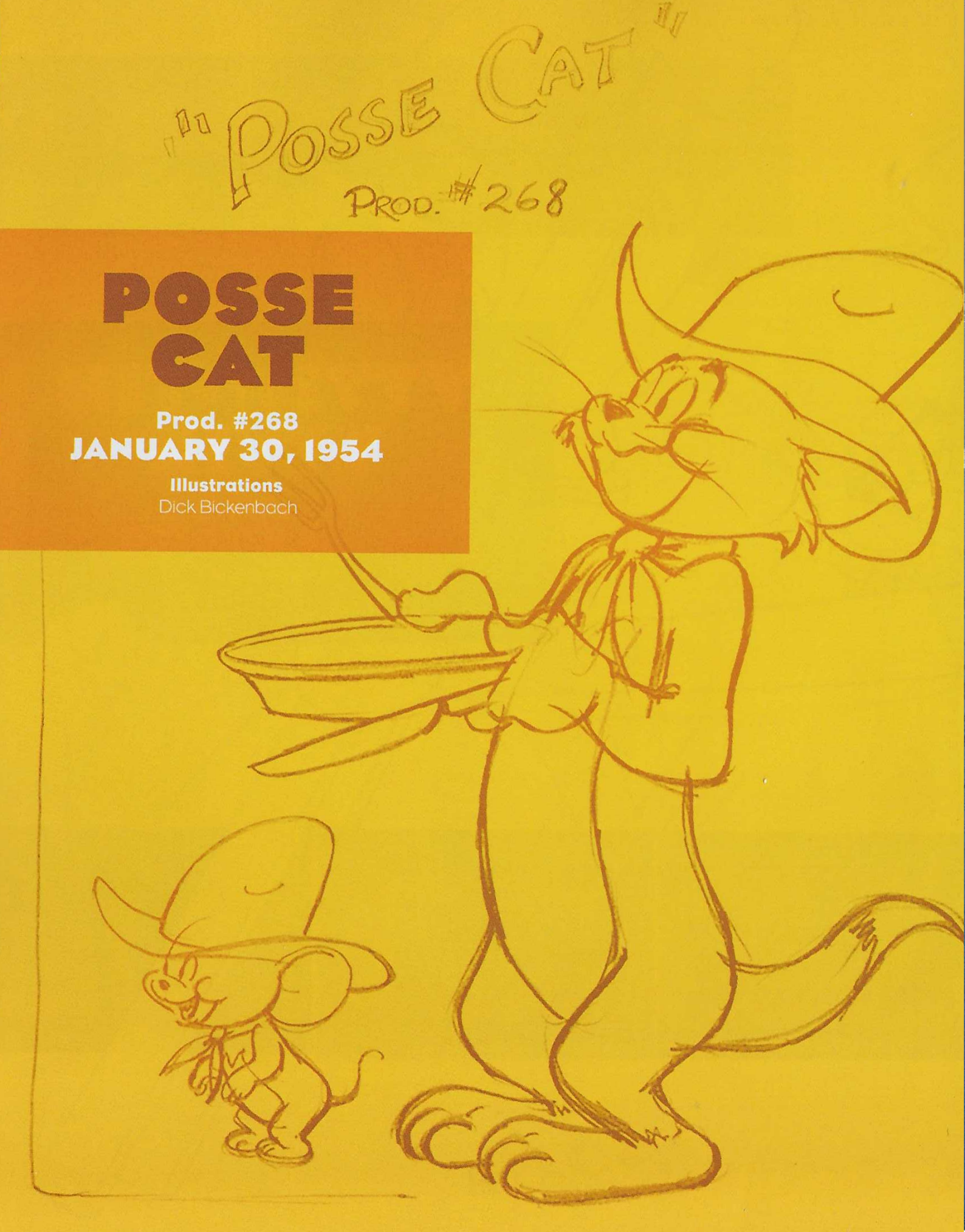
Prod. #231

OCTOBER 6, 1951

Illustrations
Ray Patterson







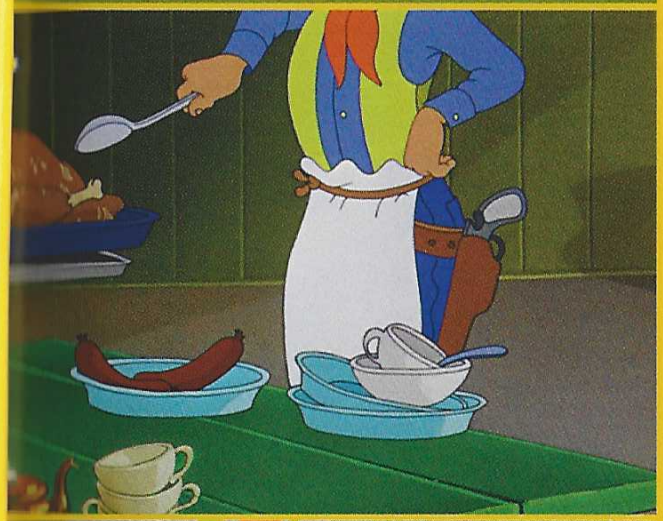
POSSE CAT

Prod. #268

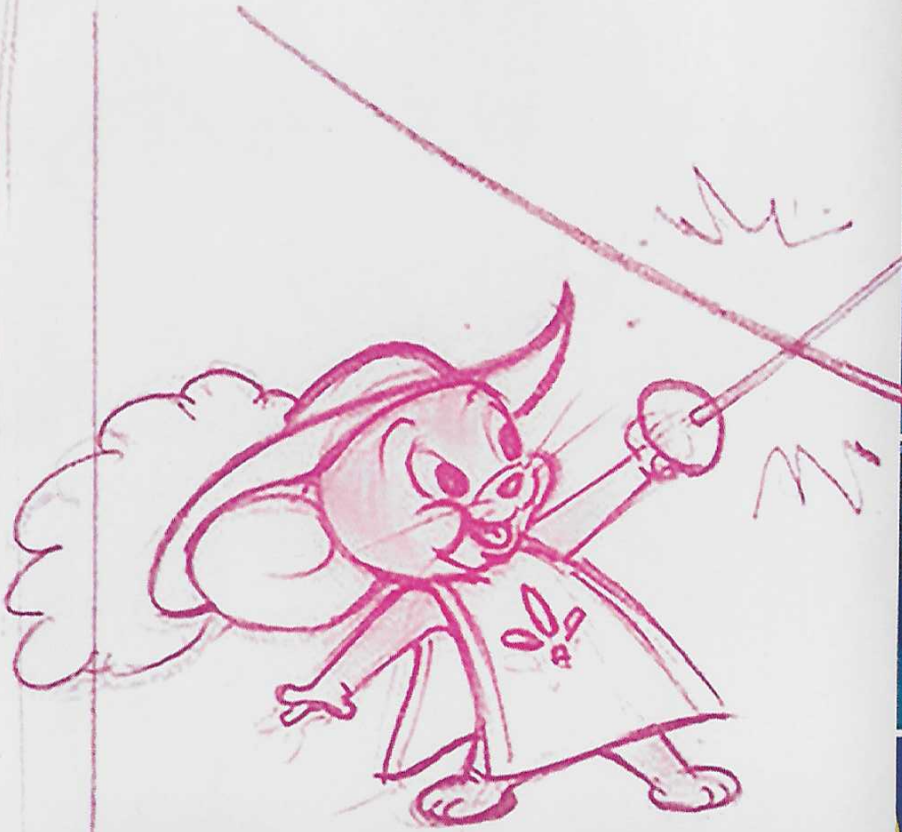
JANUARY 30, 1954

Illustrations

Dick Bickenbach



COOK



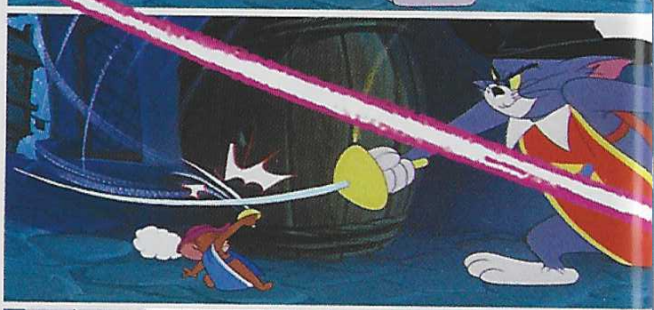
TOUCHÉ, PUSSY CAT!

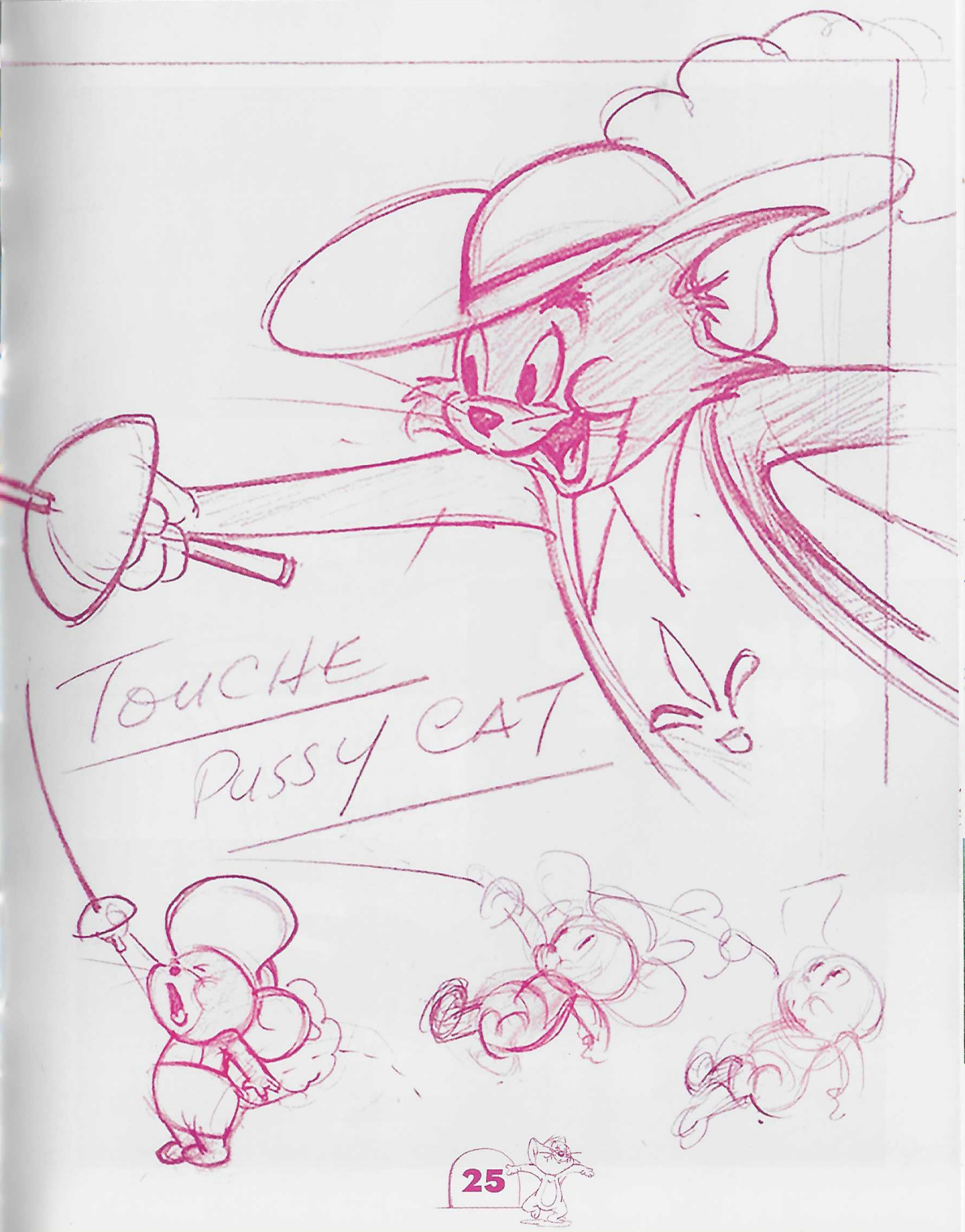
Prod. #294

DECEMBER 18, 1954

Illustrations

Dick Bickenbach, Joe Barbera




TOUCHE
PUSSY CAT

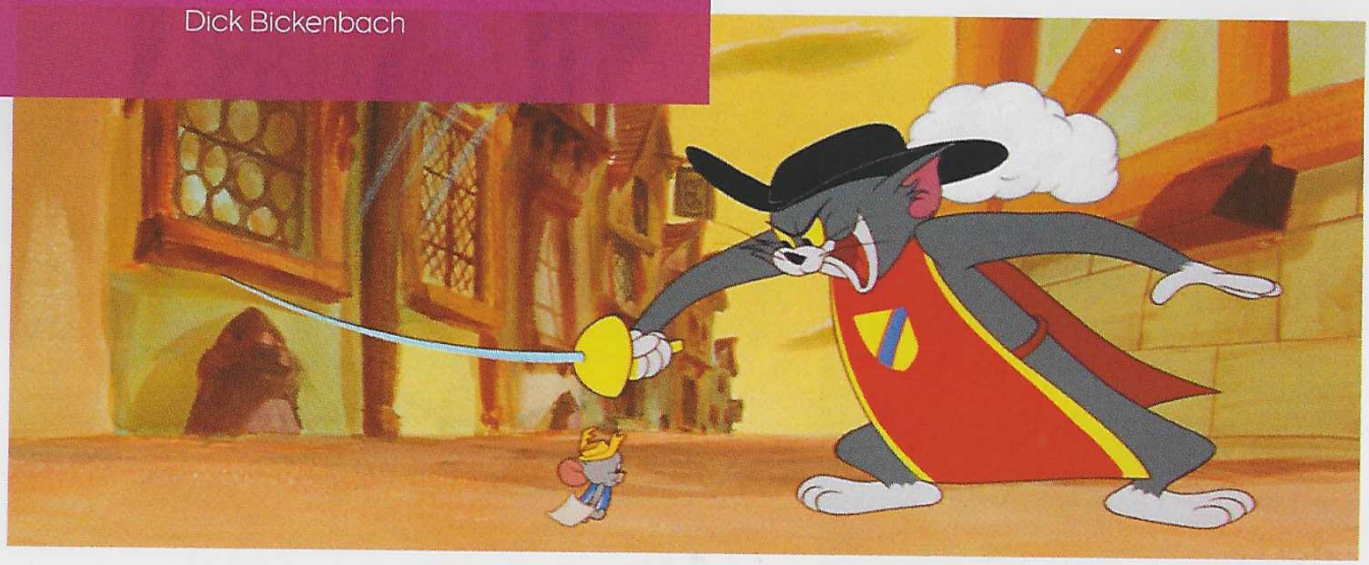
TOM AND CHÉRIE

Prod. #299

SEPTEMBER 9, 1955

Illustrations

Dick Bickenbach



— 12F- regular

LB 7.

— 15.25
cinemascope

JERRY'S HAND

FLOOR

art-letters can be med dark blue

L'Mour est
finis
Lilli

PAPER COLOR
SEE SAMPLE
SC. 25

L'amour

TABLE

Extend

Sc 26

Prod #299

PROD. No 299	ANIMATOR	
SC. 26		FIELDS 12F.

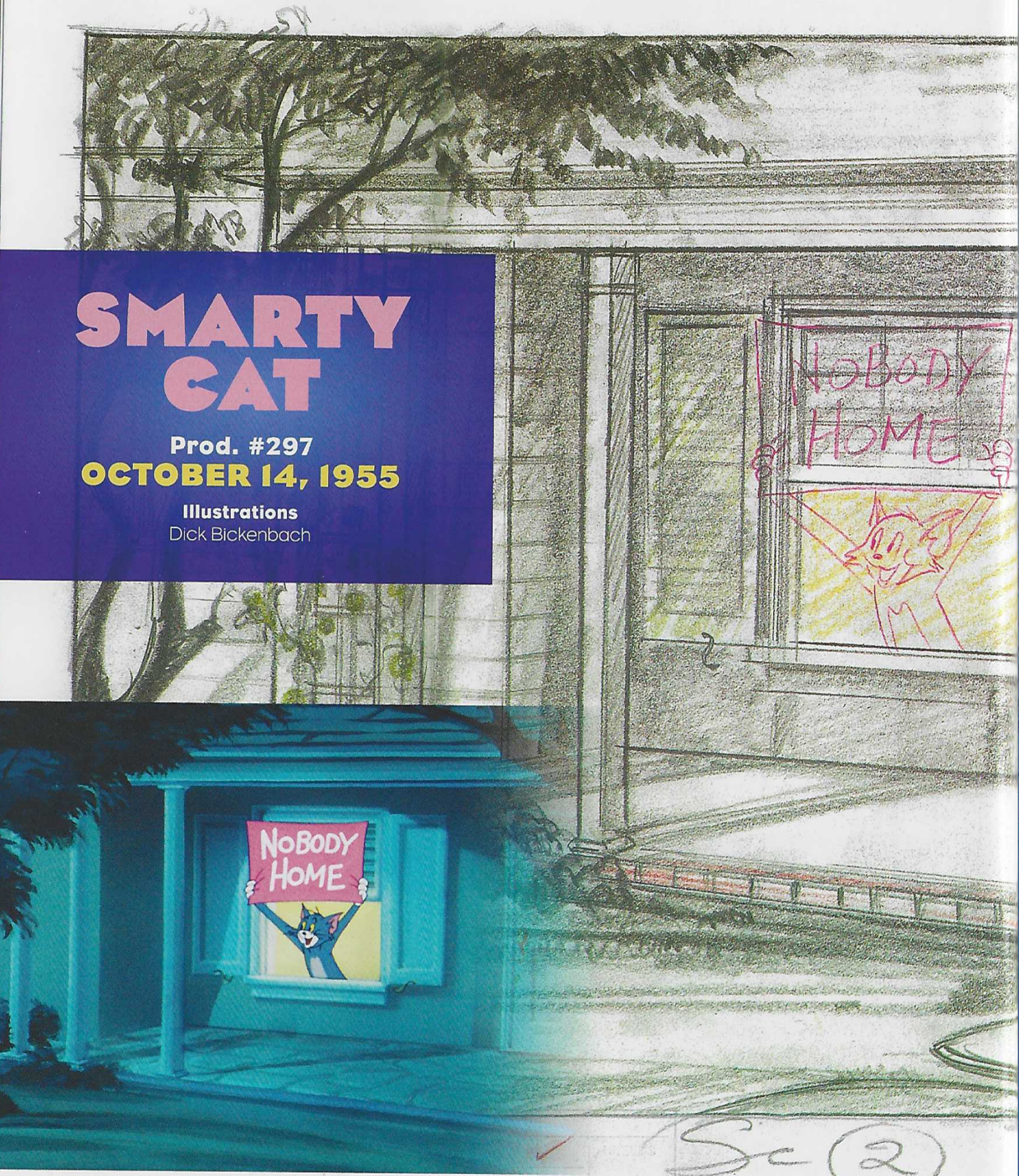
Tr. BV- 7½
PANTED" 3

SMARTY CAT

Prod. #297

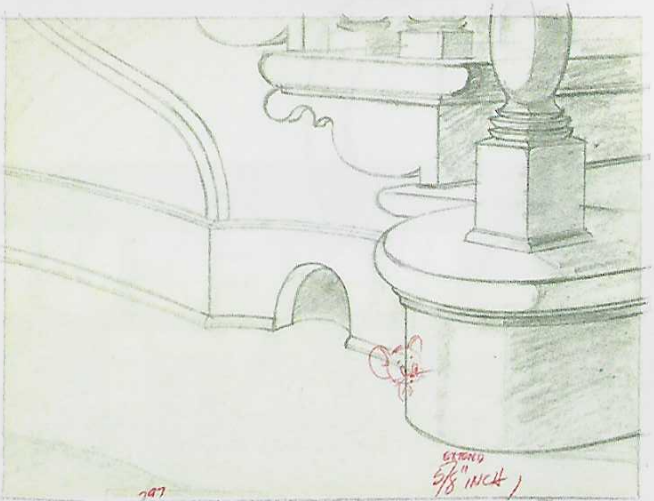
OCTOBER 14, 1955

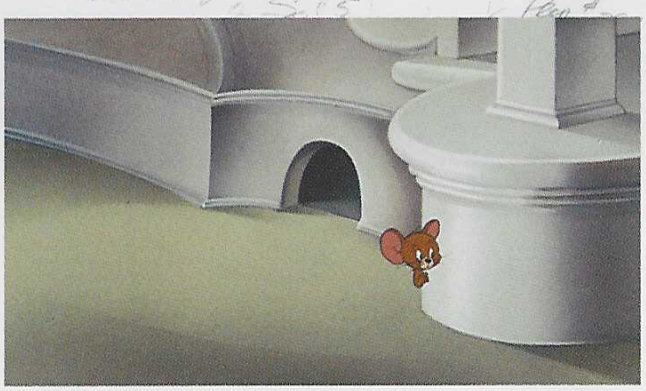
Illustrations
Dick Bickenbach



Prod #297

PAINT BACKGROUND
NORMAL (LIGHTS ON)
CAMERA WILL
UNDER EXPOSE
FOR DARKNESS
Sc (26)
Prod #297


EXTEND
5/8" INCH
297



BARBECUE BRAWL

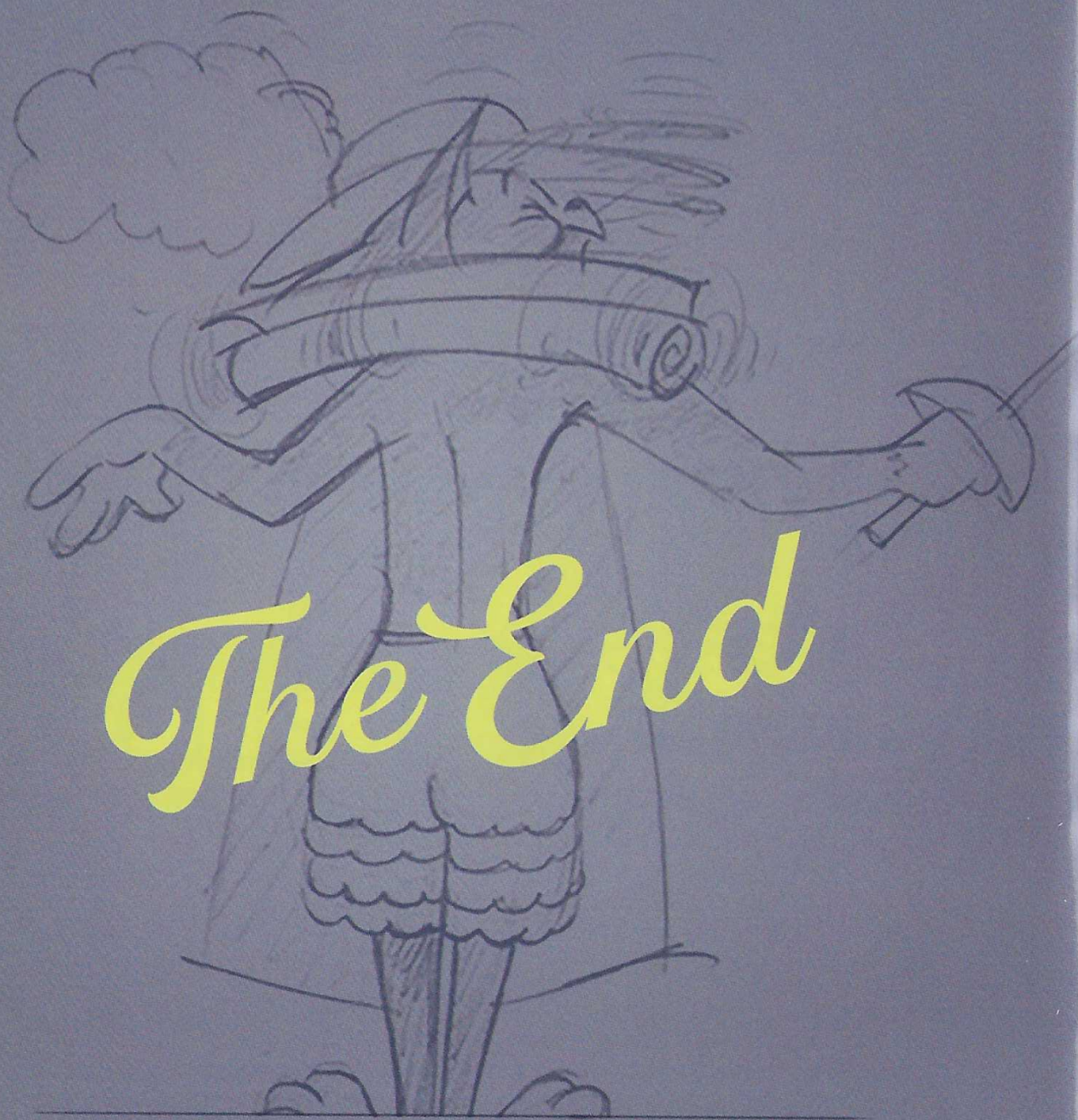
Prod. #307

DECEMBER 15, 1956

Illustrations
Irv Spence

"All you needed was a cat and mouse,
and everybody knew what was going to happen."

– JOSEPH BARBERA



The End

Special Thanks to Jerry Beck, Devon Baxter, Thad Komorowski and Mike Russo.

Illustration – Dick Bickenbach

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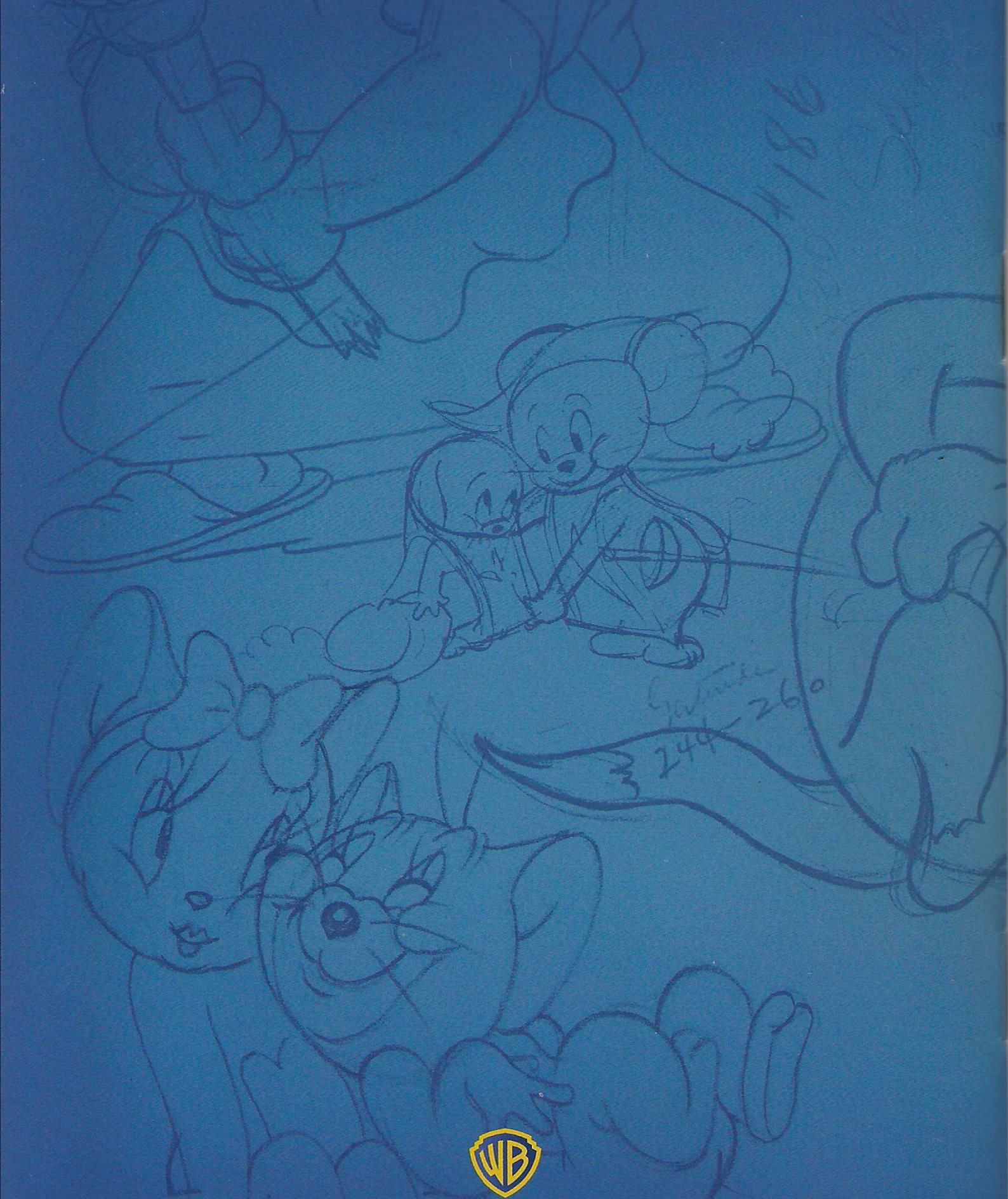

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